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MARY ANN SHADD-CARY. 1823-1893.

The Foremost Colored Canadian Pioneer, in 1850.

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Of the women of the colored race who rendered signal service in the cause of freedom, and there were many, the subject of this sketch is by reason of the great energy displayed and sincere devotion to the cause; joined to remarkable intellectual power, entitled to stand in the front rank of that noble band whose virtues and services are the priceless heiritage of the colored race.

Casting a rapid glance down the pages of history and scanning the same with infinite patience and care, I am prepared to say that there are very few women of the colored race, indeed, few of any race, who have left their impression more indelibly upon the age in which they lived, or wrought more beneficially for suffering humanity than Mrs. Cary.

In 1850 when the "Fugitive Slave Law" went into effect thousands of men, women, and children were obliged as an act of precaution, to preserve their freedom, to seek safety in Canada. It is only by extensive reading that one can gather an adequate idea of the consternation, the fear and trembling that entered the homes of thousands of colored families who had been for many years regarded as free. Now they were all liable to be dragged back to slavery. Many had only the means necessary to carry them ^{to the Canadian shelter} and until they could get employment would be dependent wholly upon

charity. They were fleeing into a strange land from the galling yoke of slavery, of which they had tasted, some only in its lightest form, and it is worthy of consideration in estimating the character of slavery, to picture those people facing starvation in a wilderness country rather than again be under its fatal and galling yoke. It was amid such scenes as these that the subject of this sketch gave to the world a hundred instances of female heroism, any one of which, is sufficient to rescue her name from oblivion and place it in the category of similar characters like Grace Darling, Dorothy Dix, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman or Florence Nightingale.

Mary Ann Shadd-Carby was born in the city of Wilmington, Del., October 9th, 1823, and was carried, when but ten years old, by her parents to West Chester, Penna., that she might have at that place the facilities of an educational institution carried on under the supervision of the Society of Friends, since Delaware being a slave state, offered no such facilities. After six years spent therein, she returned to Wilmington and herself opened a school for colored children. Sometime after when public schools took the place of private tuition, Mrs. Carby taught first in West Chester, then in New York City, and later in Norristown, Pa. It was while at Norristown in 1850, that the Fugitive Slave Law was passed, whereupon she determined to go to Canada and learn what opportunities the country offered favorable to the settlement of emigrants of colored people from the North and West, many of whom were

nominally free only and were in great danger under the Fugitive Slave Law, the provisions of which were very stringent, of being seized and carried back to bondage, though for twenty years they had been regarded by everybody as free and in some cases had acquired considerable property. To begin her mission, Mrs. ^{Carey} ~~Carley~~ located at Windsor, Canada, opposite Detroit, Mich., and at once fitted up as a school part of the "Old Barracks" then used in part as a shelter for the newly arrived fugitives. She at once began ^{and published} the preparation of a pamphlet which was widely circulated in the United States, setting forth in plain language the opportunities for emigrants in Canada. To make more effective her work, she returned to the United States and during several years delivered lectures throughout the Middle Eastern and Western States. Her mission was so successful and so highly appreciated by all there, that in 1854, a number of colored men in Toronto, assisted her in establishing a weekly paper "The Provincial Freeman," to be devoted to the interest of the colored people generally but especially to the fugitives from slavery, in Canada. Owing to the vigor with which Mrs. Carey attacked the slave interest in her paper, particularly its sympathisers located in Windsor and St. Catherines and on the American border, every effort was made by them to squelch the sheet. It run, however, three years, though it was only financed in the beginning for one. She consenting to take the helm until

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active member of the National
Woman's Suffrage Association

the designated editor from the States should arrive, and as he failed to come, she fearlessly braved the storm alone. On the 3rd of January, 1856, as Mary Ann Shadd, she was married at the home of Mrs. David B. Williamson in St. Catherines, Canada, to Thomas S. Carly, of Toronto. After marriage she with her husband took up residence at Chatham, at which place in the autumn of 1860 in the John Brown movement. Mrs. Carly died. In 1868 when John Brown held his "Convention" prior to the events at Harpers Ferry. In 1861 he compiled the notes of Osborn P. Anderson (the survivor). It is very difficult at this date to adequately impress the present generation with a full appreciation of Mrs. Carly's work. She was the pioneer colored female lecturer in the United States, as she was the pioneer colored woman to publish a newspaper. At that time Abbey Kelly, Lucretia Mott and Lucy Stone, Anti-Slavery Lecturers, took their lives in their hands each time they attempted to urge freedom for the slave, and from this a faint idea can be gleaned as to the danger that threatened a colored woman, who publicly sought to aid the fugitive slave to seek a home in Canada, and offered the means to carry them there.

It is true Sojourner Truth, Hester Reckless, and Jarena Lee spoke in public on the anti-slavery cause, but they did not publicly urge fugitives to seek freedom by fleeing to Canada after the "Fugitive Slave Bill" was passed.

At the beginning of the Civil War, Mrs. Carly was teaching school in Michigan and when in 1863 a call for 500,000 men was issued, Mrs. Carly ~~colored troops were enlisted in the Union Army, she accepted a commission from Gen. Oliver H. Morton, of Indiana, and actively assisted in recruiting 900 men~~